

the land and the wildlife would be permanent but the hoped-for energy benefits only temporary. There are some places in our world that are so rare and so special, that we have a responsibility to protect them. The Arctic Refuge is one of those places. As Mo Udall said, "In our lifetime, we have few opportunities to shape the very Earth on which our descendants will live their lives. In each generation, we have carved up more and more of our once-great natural heritage. There ought to be a few places left in the world the way the Almighty made them." The Udall-Eisenhower Arctic Wilderness Act would ensure that the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is never carved up by the big oil companies but is instead forever protected for future Americans.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CALLING FOR 2-1-1 ACT OF 2007

HON. LEE TERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. TERRY. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Calling for 2-1-1 Act of 2007. I am proud to lend my support as an original cosponsor of this bill, which was introduced today by my colleague, Ms. ESHOO of California. I would also like to note a concern I have with the bill as introduced, which I hope will be resolved prior to a vote in the full House of Representatives.

2-1-1 is the number designated by the Federal Communications Commission to provide citizens with information and referral about important community services and volunteer opportunities. United Way and its affiliates operate more than 200 call centers in 41 states nationwide, including my home state of Nebraska. About two-thirds of American citizens currently have access to 2-1-1 referrals. The Calling for 2-1-1 Act will help achieve nationwide coverage for all citizens.

More than 50 percent of the calls made to 2-1-1 call centers are placed to meet basic needs such as food, heat, clothing and shelter for citizens facing difficulty. 2-1-1 helps to keep citizens off long-term government financial aid such as welfare and food stamps by meeting immediate needs before they become crises. 2-1-1 also enhances homeland security by serving as an emergency backup to 9-1-1 during natural disasters and other crises.

In my Congressional District alone, almost 40,000 Nebraskans sought information through 2-1-1 between November 2005 and October 2006. The top needs were for assistance with utilities, rent, food, housing, health and dental care, furniture and tax preparation. Thousands of Nebraskans were able to obtain assistance from federal and non-profit community service agencies because of the existence of 2-1-1.

2-1-1 was crucial during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. When 9-1-1 emergency lines were inoperational, 2-1-1 stepped up to link citizens in dire need with critical services, including emergency medical care, food and housing, and crisis recovery and relocation services nationwide. Volunteer organizations such as the Red Cross also benefit from people who call 2-1-1 seeking opportunities to give back to their communities. 2-1-1 meets critical needs and merits federal aid, provided

that additional protections are put in place before this legislation is brought to a vote.

It was my privilege to work last year with Ms. ESHOO and Mrs. CLINTON in the Senate, as well as Mr. PICKERING and Mr. BILIRAKIS in the House of Representatives, to address important concerns for "socially sensitive" referrals before bringing the Calling for 2-1-1 Act to a vote. As Members of Congress with deep convictions for the protection of human life, we drafted language to refer callers seeking pregnancy-related services to public health departments.

This reasonable compromise was designed to ensure the 2-1-1 legislation does not become a vehicle for taxpayer funding of controversial referrals such as abortion. Unfortunately, this important language, which had been agreed upon by all parties, was not included in the legislation introduced today. I look forward to working with my Ms. ESHOO and my other colleagues to correct this situation.

If my concerns are not addressed, I would be forced to vote against and actively fight against the legislation I have cosponsored and worked to enact into law, despite my strong support for increasing access to 2-1-1 for more American citizens. The fact that I have again cosponsored this legislation despite my concern is testament to the good working relationship I have enjoyed with Ms. ESHOO and Ms. CLINTON, and which I trust will continue during this new Congress.

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to help this legislation become law while ensuring it protects and upholds the sanctity of human life.

IN HONOR OF UNIVERSITY PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate University Park Elementary School upon its receipt of the Department of Education's prestigious Blue Ribbon School Award.

University Park Elementary School is among the first selected in the 2006 No Child Left Behind—Blue Ribbon Schools Program. It is among only 250 schools nationwide honored for either superior academic achievement or dramatic gains in student achievement.

The Blue Ribbon Award is a testament to the hard work and dedication demonstrated by the students, parents, teachers, and administrators of University Park Elementary. This Award also recognizes the values that make the Highland Park Independent School District a beacon of academic excellence.

It is my honor and privilege to recognize University Park Elementary School for its outstanding achievement in preparing our children for the challenges of tomorrow. May University Park Elementary School continue to be a shining example of superior leadership and commitment to excellence in education.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION FOR SWEARING IN CEREMONY

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Madam Speaker, please excuse my absence from the formal House of Representatives swearing in ceremony today as I was unavoidably detained while paying my respects to a fallen soldier from my district at his funeral in Arlington National Cemetery. I appreciate the opportunity to take my oath of office on my return to the U.S. Capitol.

RECOGNIZING MATTHEW A. PILCH FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Matthew A. Pilch, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 374, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Matthew has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Matthew has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Matthew A. Pilch for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout. I am honored to represent Matthew in the United States House of Representatives.

TRIBUTE TO THE PEOPLES BANK

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 4, 2007

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Madam Speaker, it is with pleasure that I stand before you today to recognize the many accomplishments of Peoples Bank and offer my congratulations on their 97th Anniversary in the Northwest Indiana community. To commemorate this special occasion, Peoples Bank will hold an anniversary celebration on Saturday, January 6, 2007, at the Center for Visual and Performing Arts in Munster, Indiana.

Peoples Bank was established in 1910 and was organized with a focus to meet the many needs of its consumers. Peoples Bank was originally known as the First Polish National Building and Loan Association. During that time, it was the main hub for church and social activities in East Chicago, Indiana. Over several decades, the association's name changed numerous times, and in 1989, it was renamed Peoples Bank.

Peoples Bank was the first savings and loan association to receive a federal charter in East